
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION OF MAINE

Benjamin M. Sanborn

P.O. Box 5347 Augusta ME 04330 TEL: 207-314-2609

E-MAIL: Ben@SanbornEsq.com

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Senator Mark Lawrence, Senate Chair
Representative Seth Berry, House Chair
Members of the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee
129th Maine Legislature
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: LD 31, An Act Regarding Rules Adopted by the ConnectME Authority

The Telecommunications Association of Maine (TAM) offers the following testimony in SUPPORT of LD 31, "An Act Regarding Rules Adopted by the ConnectME Authority".

TAM has participated in the ConnectME Authority since its inception. We were active in the drafting of the initial legislation, as well as the initial rulemaking. When ConnectME first came into being, the Internet was on the cusp of expansion but there was still a question of whether it would become an economic driver or simply a fad used primarily to illegally download songs. As such, at the time the initial legislation was adopted, the legislature reasonably concluded that there could be significant changes in the industry and the manner in which the State supported internet service would ultimately be a policy decision. In that context, having the Rules be major substantive ensured that the legislature would have final say on any potential shifts in policy relating to internet service in Maine.

We are now in a situation where the industry is more vibrant than ever, but the State policy has become much more clear. The ConnectME authority continues to need the ability to adjust to meet changes in the industry as technology advances, but the core policy questions are settled and the legislature can be confident that any rule changes would simply be to implement the State policy on broadband and not run the risk of imposing on the legislature's sole authority to set policy for the State. Transforming ConnectME Authority rules to Routine Technical Rules will permit the ConnectME authority to be more responsive in carrying out the directives of the legislature.

Accordingly, TAM urges the Committee to vote OUGHT TO PASS on LD 31, "An Act Regarding Rules Adopted by the ConnectME Authority".

Sincerely,



Benjamin M. Sanborn, Esq.
Telecommunications Association of Maine